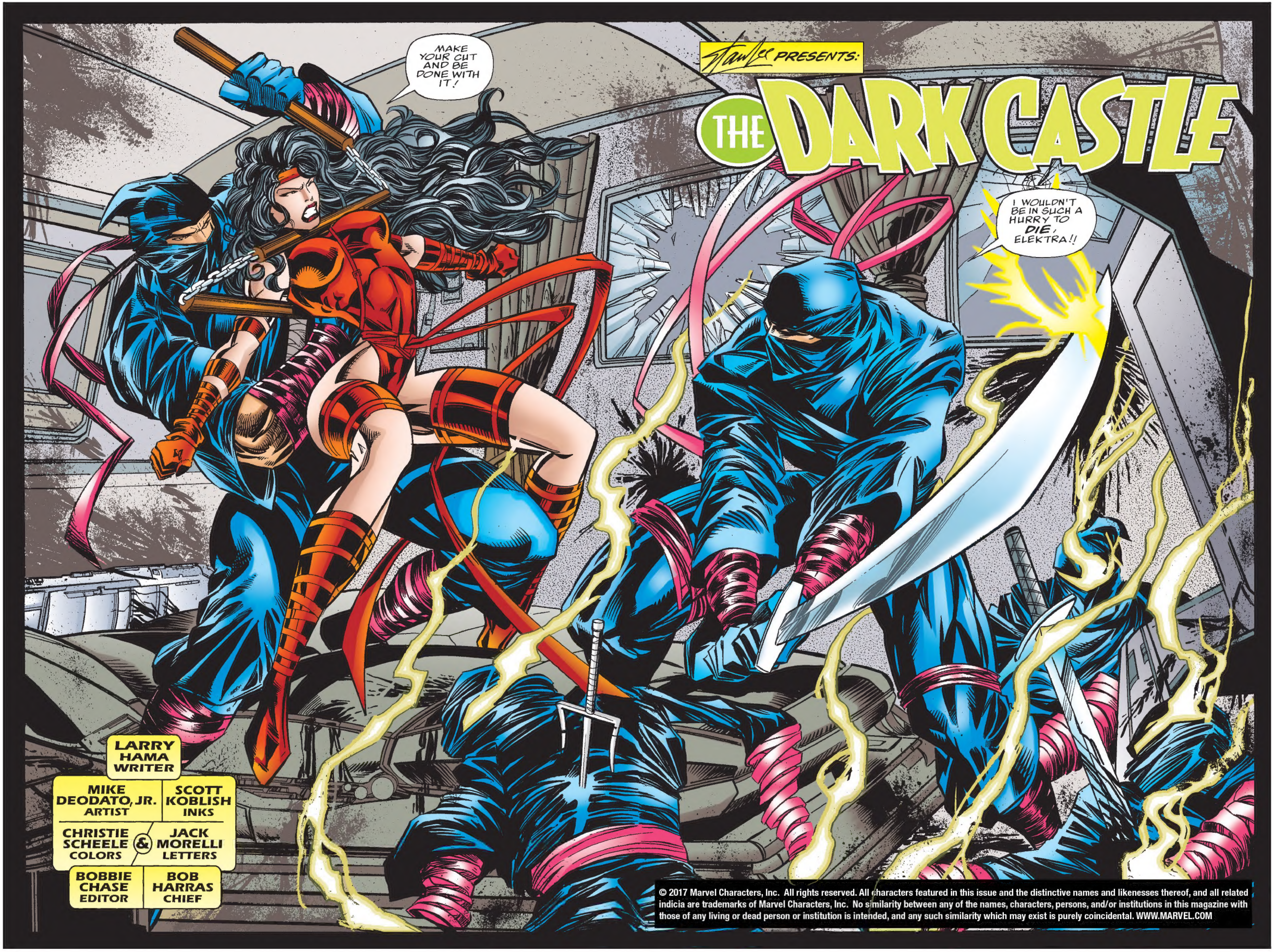
MARVEL COMICS
ELEKTRA
FEB
#15
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
IT'S WAR AGAINST THE HAND
HAMA
DEODATO, JR.
KOBLISH
MIKE DEODATO JR.

JAPAN.
SOME COME HERE FOR BUSINESS.
OTHERS TO SEEK THE SERENITY OF A ZEN GARDEN.
I COME WITH COLD STEEL AND A HARDENED HEART...
...TO EXACT RIGHTEOUS REVENGE AND RESTITUTION FROM THE HAND.
THE HAND, BEING AN OCCULT CLAN OF ASSASSINS, BROOKS NO REPRISALS...
HARBII MARU
...AND DISPENSES NO REFUNDS.
SO, I MADE MY WAY TO NIPPON COVERTLY, AS CARGO.
COMEX
A SECURE AND SECRET MODE OF TRANSPORT...
...OR SO I THOUGHT.
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, DOG?



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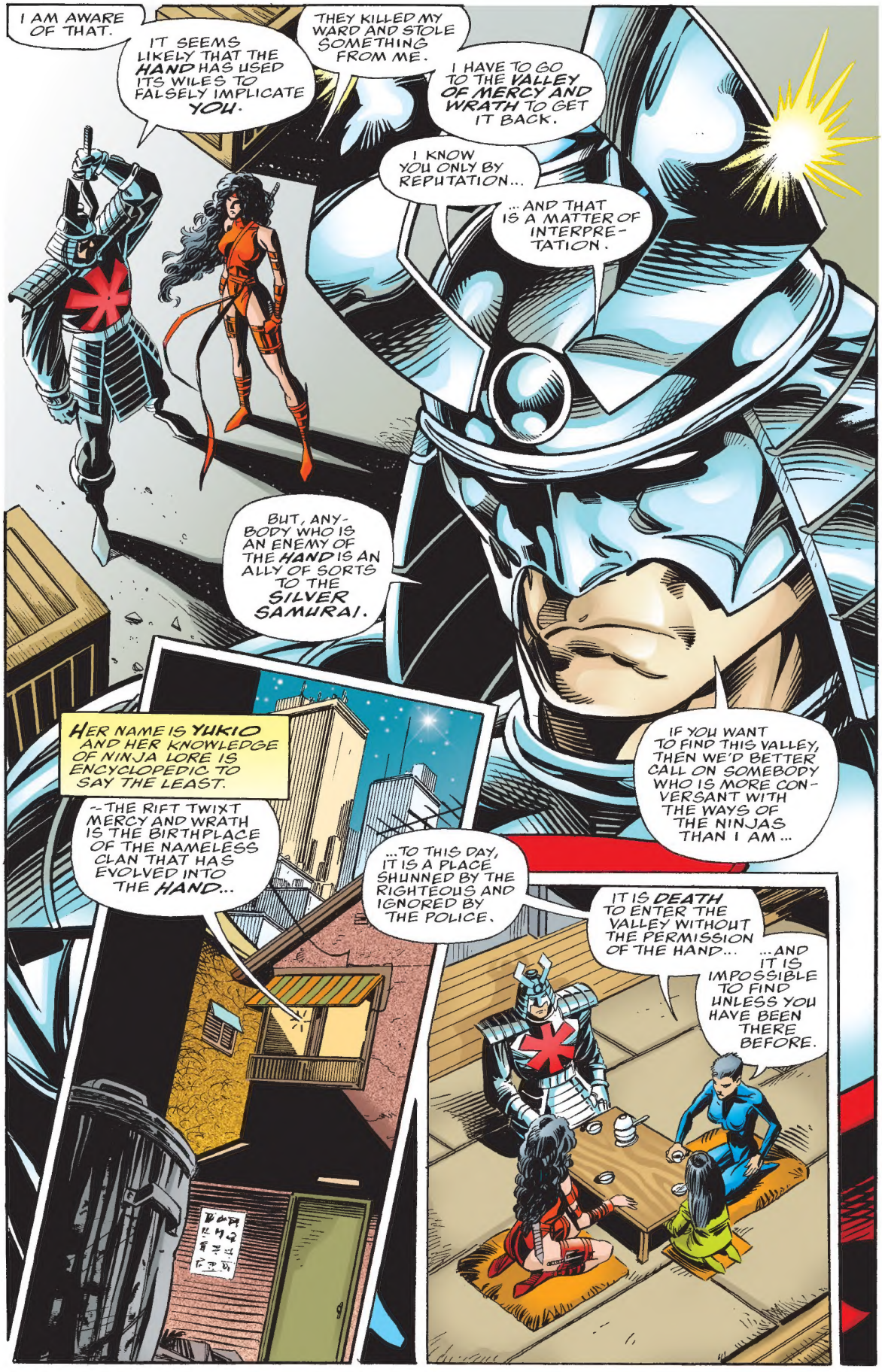
IT'S NOT ME WHO'S GOING TO DIE.
VWWSSH
KRAKH
WHUK

SKRASSH
SHRAK
SHLICKT
SHING!
SHLIKT
SSSLINK
ADVANCE NO FURTHER, ELEKTRA.
I GO WHERE I PLEASE, WHOEVER YOU ARE...

I AM THE
SILVER SAMURAI.
AND I AM NO MERE FOOTPAD OR HIGHBINDER SUCH AS THESE YOU HAVE SO BLITHELY DISPATCHED.
ARE YOU GOING TO USE THAT BLADE, OR ARE YOU JUST AIRING IT OUT?
THIS IS THE HONOR SWORD OF THE YASHIDA CLAN, AND IT WAS GIVEN TO ME FOR SAFEKEEPING BY LOGAN.
I HAVE PLEDGED TO WIELD IT ONLY AGAINST EVIL.
OH? SINCE WHEN HAVE I CROSSED THE LINE?
THESE NINJA MEANT TO MURDER ME IN MY SLEEP.

DEAD ASSASSINS ARE OF NO CONCERN TO ME OR THE WORLD AT LARGE...
DAILY GLOBE
WANTED!
DANCER SOUGHT IN CONNECTION WITH BIZARRE MURDERS
Police are questioning all known associates of former broadway star Epsilon, aka Elektra, who captivated audiences last season in the Konrad Weiss production of "GREEK." It has come to light that both Interpol and S.H.I.E.L.D. have extensive dossiers on Elektra and suspect her involvement with the secret cult of assassins known as the "HAND." Apparently there are certain details concerning the methods and weapons used in the murders of three corporate executives that are consistant with Elektra's modus operandi. Although authorities are not forthcoming... sodhfhdfhb kjdflughr kjdfiughr bnoshfh sodhfhdfhb soihf osdbhnf neohhrg zohngoerbhg zohngoergbn georgbnerognbgonb krnbgrgognongb iongbrbngn obngrbg oedbngojrbnggo kjfnapiwkolp zloij zodjnnwqe wosejowen olnsfonnonnnfn nojvniz xdnvo we qqonaszlzl zxcnvodnfo xlxcnvonvon o spjjfoijnfoifno sldnfodnf skdndosnzxojd klsdn fksdnfdj sonfodnfo sodnfodfdfnsdfn osdnfodn fbdnfbd osdnfons pa,, psdjmfnnfnm psmodjmf s pmfdmmf smfdnmfdnmf spmfdnmfnmdf oslnm fodnfndfdsk sdonmfodnfd sofnmosdnfdnfdo so lnmfosdnfvnm sldnfop sopdnf slonf sldnf zp[sd;l;a sdnmf slodnfnn kjdfiughr bnoshfh sodhfhdfhb soihf osdbhnf neohhrg zohngoerbhg zohngoergbn georgbnerognbgonb krnbgrgognongb iongbrbngn obngrbg oedbngojrbnggo kjfnapiwkolp zloij zodjnnwqe
...THE BUTCHERY OF WELL-TO-DO AND HIGHLY CONNECTED CITIZENS IS ANOTHER MATTER ENTIRELY.
THESE MURDERS HAPPENED LAST WEEK...
...I'VE BEEN HOLED UP IN A CARGO CONTAINER TAKING THE LONG ROUTE THROUGH THE PANAMA CANAL FOR THE LAST THREE WEEKS!


I AM AWARE OF THAT.
IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE HAND HAS USED ITS WILES TO FALSELY IMPLICATE YOU.
THEY KILLED MY WARD AND STOLE SOMETHING FROM ME.
I HAVE TO GO TO THE VALLEY OF MERCY AND WRATH TO GET IT BACK.
I KNOW YOU ONLY BY REPUTATION...
...AND THAT IS A MATTER OF INTERPRETATION.
BUT, ANYBODY WHO IS AN ENEMY OF THE HAND IS AN ALLY OF SORTS TO THE SILVER SAMURAI.
HER NAME IS YUKIO AND HER KNOWLEDGE OF NINJA LORE IS ENCYCLOPEDIC TO SAY THE LEAST.
--THE RIFT TWIXT MERCY AND WRATH IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE NAMELESS CLAN THAT HAS EVOLVED INTO THE HAND...
...TO THIS DAY, IT IS A PLACE SHUNNED BY THE RIGHTEOUS AND IGNORED BY THE POLICE.
IF YOU WANT TO FIND THIS VALLEY, THEN WE'D BETTER CALL ON SOMEBODY WHO IS MORE CONVERSANT WITH THE WAYS OF THE NINJAS THAN I AM...
IT IS DEATH TO ENTER THE VALLEY WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE HAND...
...AND IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND UNLESS YOU HAVE BEEN THERE BEFORE.

THEN I'VE WASTED MY TIME HERE...
WAIT!

I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, ELEKTRA--
--AND I KNOW WHAT YOU DID FOR LOGAN-SAN, WHO IS CALLED WOLVERINE.
BOTH MY WARD, AMIKO, AND I HAVE A DEBT OF OBLIGATION TO LOGAN--IT IS GIRI. YOU KNOW THIS WORD?
YES. GIRI IS INVIOLABLE.

ABSOLUTELY.
I HAVE BEEN TO THE VALLEY.
I WILL TAKE YOU THERE, FOR LOGAN'S SAKE.

I WILL GO AS WELL. AS PROTECTOR OF THE YASHIDA CLAN I AM OBLIGA--
NO.
YOU MUST STAY BEHIND AND LOOK AFTER AMIKO...

... AND ASSUME CUSTODIANSHIP IF I FAIL TO RETURN.

AMIKO-CHAN, RUN AND GET US SOME RICE CAKES TO GO WITH OUR TEA, PLEASE.
HAI!

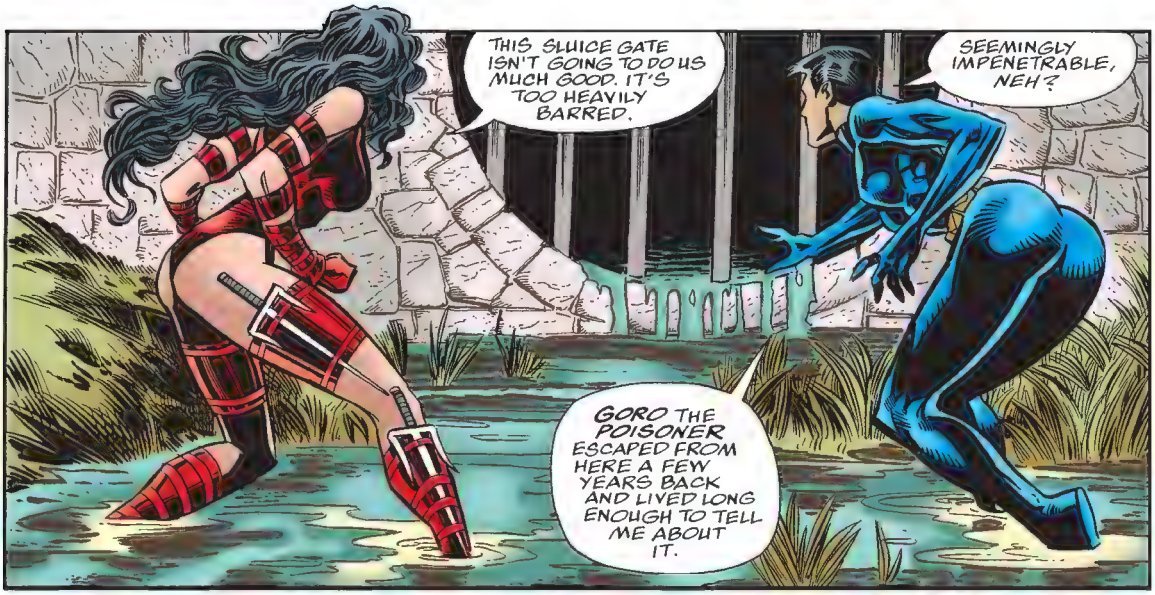
A BEAUTIFUL CHILD. IS SHE--?
SHE IS AN ORPHAN. SHE WAS THE WARD OF LOGAN...

"...WHEN HE LOST HIS ADAMANTIUM AND REALIZED HE WAS REGRESSING TO A FERAL STATE...

"...HE ASKED ME TO ASSUME GUARDIANSHIP.
"I HAVE NOT REGRETTED MY DECISION TO ACCEPT."

HELLO? THE FRIENDS OF LOGAN ARE HERE.
YES. THE LOGAN THAT MURDERED MY MOTHER.
YUKIO IS TAKING THE ONE CALLED ELEKTRA TO...

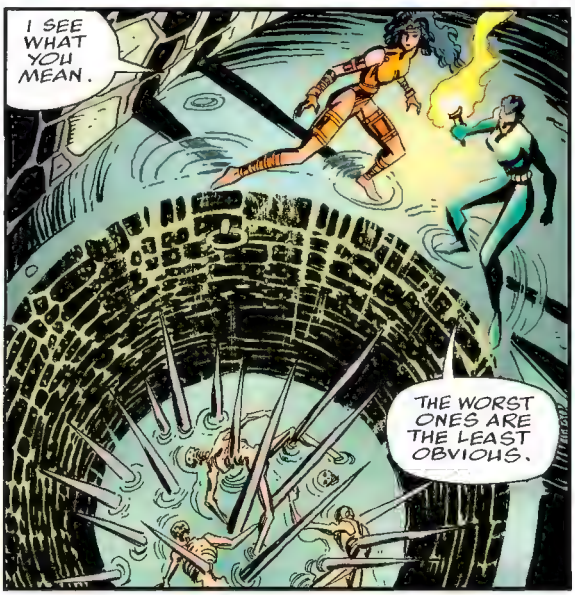
"...THE VALLEY OF MERCY AND WRATH."
SHUNK
THIS WAS A PRE-SET AMBUSH.
WE MUST'VE BEEN BETRAYED.
SMACK
BUT ONLY THE SILVER SAMURAI KNEW ABOUT OUR PLAN!
AMIKO KNEW!
WHUK
WHUK
NO! SHE IS AN INNOCENT CHILD!
SLASH
AS IT IS, THE HAND UNDERESTIMATED OUR PROWESS.
THE WAY IS CLEAR TO THEIR CITADEL!
WE'VE LOST THE ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE, SO SCALING THE WALLS UNDETECTED IS OUT.
I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY STORMING THE FRONT GATE WITH ME--
I DON'T INTEND TO. THERE IS ANOTHER WAY IN...


THIS SLUICE GATE ISN'T GOING TO DO US MUCH GOOD. IT'S TOO HEAVILY BARRED.
SEEMINGLY IMPENETRABLE, NEH?
GORO THE POISONER ESCAPED FROM HERE A FEW YEARS BACK AND LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO TELL ME ABOUT IT.

THE SECOND BAR FROM THE RIGHT HAS BEEN HACKSAWED AND FITTED BACK INTO PLACE.
KRAK

IT'S PITCH BLACK IN THERE, AND PROBABLY RIFE WITH BOOBY-TRAPS!
THERE ARE TORCHES IN THE WALL SCONCES...

... AND YOU'RE RIGHT. WE HAD BEST WATCH OUR STEP FROM NOW ON.


I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN.
THE WORST ONES ARE THE LEAST OBVIOUS.

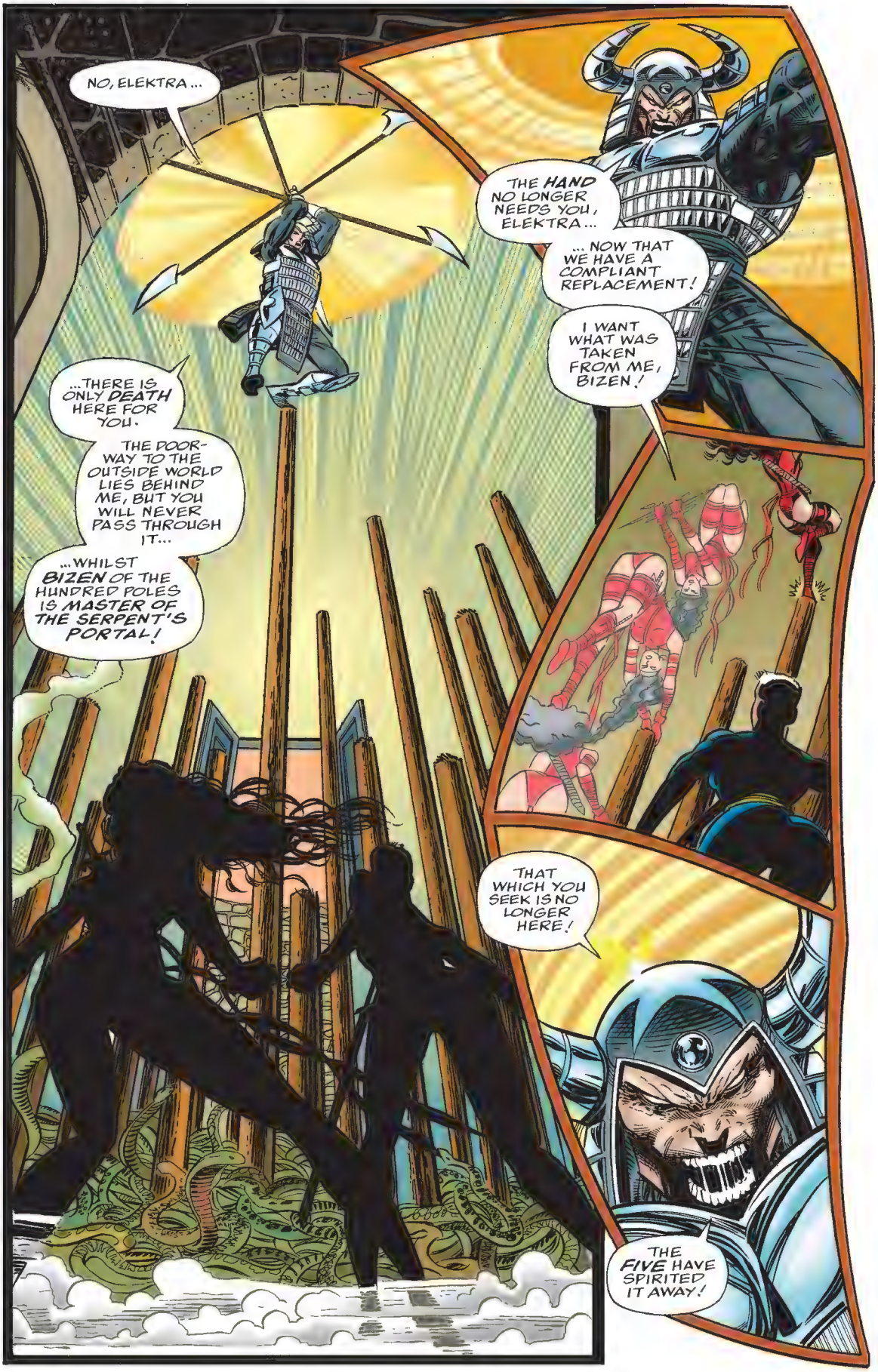
YOU MUST HAVE QUITE A GRUDGE AGAINST THE HAND TO RISK COMING HERE.
I WAS ONE OF THEM AT ONE TIME.
I DIDN'T THINK THEY ACCEPTED RESIGNATIONS.
THEY DON'T.
THEY SENT KUROYAMA TO COLLECT THE DEBT THEY CLAIM I OWE THEM.
HE WAS LIKE A NINJA ON STEROIDS.
HE RIPPED THE BEATING HEART OUT OF MY WARD, NINA, AND FORCED ME TO WATCH.
PUT YOU BACK TOGETHER? WHAT--?
WOLVERINE AND I RAIDED A NEST OF HAND NINJAS AND ONE OF THEM TOLD ME A SECRET...
THE TORCH BLEW OUT!
WHOOSH
...HE SAID THAT WHEN THE HAND PUT ME BACK TOGETHER, THEY HELD SOMETHING BACK...

SOMEBODY OPENED A DOOR FURTHER DOWN THE TUNNEL, CAUSING A DRAFT!
IT'S TOTALLY DARK! HOW--?
SHHHH!
IT'S AN OLD NINJA TRICK...
...USING THE SCABBARD BALANCED ON THE POINT OF THE SWORD AS AN EXTENDED PROBE.
THE THONG THAT HOLDS IT UPRIGHT TRANSMITS THE SLIGHTEST VIBRATION THROUGH MY TEETH...
...AND TELLS ME EXACTLY WHERE MY UNSEEN FOE IS!

STRIKE NOW, YUKIO--
SHAK
--WHILE WE HAVE THE LIGHT FROM THE SELF-COMBUSTING HAND NINJA!
SHAK-SHAK
SSHINK
WHY DO THEY BURN UP LIKE THAT WHEN THEY DIE?
WHITE PHOSPHOROUS AMPULES SURGICALLY IMPLANTED.
I'M NOT SURE WHAT TRIGGERS IT.
IS THIS THE WAY?
THAT SHOULD BRING US UP INSIDE THE CASTLE.

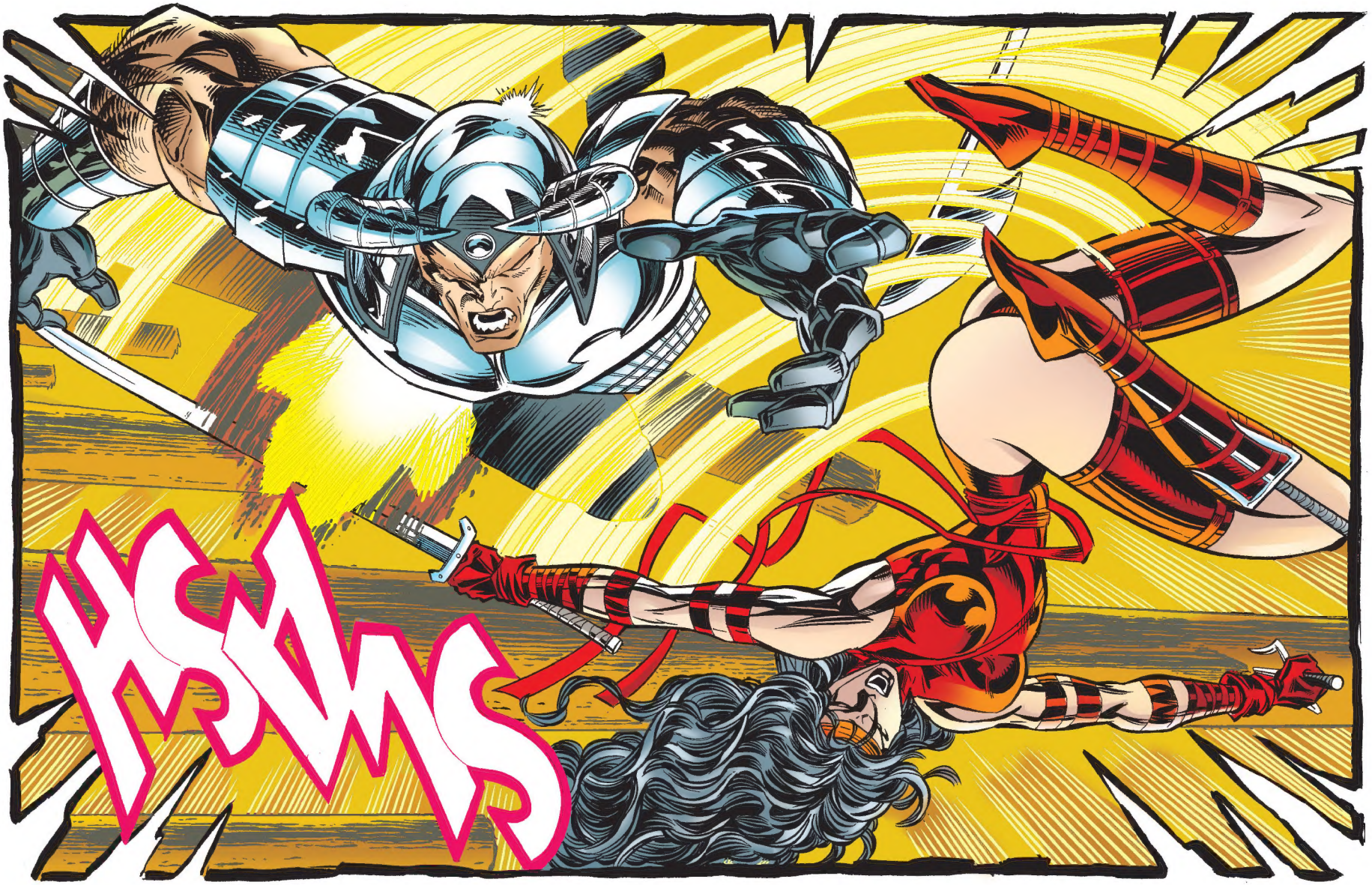
THIS PLACE REEKS OF EVIL. IT SEEPS OUT OF THE WALLS.
AND THAT IRON DOOR--IT LOOKS LIKE IT WAS MEANT TO KEEP SOMETHING FEARSOME OUT!
UP THERE ON THE DAIS...
...A CASKET!
EMPTY.
BIG ENOUGH TO HOLD A GIANT...
...AND THE BURNT REMAINS OF FOUR HAND ADEPTS.
THIS JAR...
...IT HELD THE OINTMENTS AND OCCULT HERBS.
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED HERE.
THEY CARRIED A DEAD MAN INTO THIS ROOM, AND WHEN THEY WERE THROUGH, THE DEAD MAN WALKED OUT ON HIS OWN.
THIS IS WHERE THEY REVIVED KUROYAMA, THE GIANT WHO KILLED NINA!

THAT IS A MYTH!
THE HAND CAN'T RAISE THE DEAD!
NO MYTH, YUKIO.
THEY DID IT TO ME.
THEY DISINTERRED ME AND PERFORMED A DARK AND LOATHSOME RITE WITH FRESH BLOOD AND MYSTIC OINTMENTS.
THEY GAVE ME BACK A SEMBLANCE OF LIFE, BUT KEPT BACK SOME INTRINSIC PART OF MY SOUL.
WHSSSH
THE DOOR IS OPENING!!
THERE WILL BE NO EASY EGRESS FROM THIS PLACE...


NO, ELEKTRA...
...THERE IS ONLY DEATH HERE FOR YOU.
THE DOORWAY TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD LIES BEHIND ME, BUT YOU WILL NEVER PASS THROUGH IT...
...WHILST BIZEN OF THE HUNDRED POLES IS MASTER OF THE SERPENT'S PORTAL!
THE HAND NO LONGER NEEDS YOU, ELEKTRA...
...NOW THAT WE HAVE A COMPLIANT REPLACEMENT!
I WANT WHAT WAS TAKEN FROM ME, BIZEN!
THAT WHICH YOU SEEK IS NO LONGER HERE!
THE FIVE HAVE SPIRITED IT AWAY!

AND WHO ARE THE FIVE?
NONE OTHER THAN THE HIGHEST MASTERS OF THE HAND!
THEY WHO HAVE ORDAINED YOUR DEMISE!
WHSSSH
NOTHING IS PRE-ORDAINED...
...ESPECIALLY...
...MY OWN DEATH!!
THWAK
WHAP

'TIS WRIT IN BLOOD, GIRL!
THEN IT'S A FORGERY!
KRAK
HOLD ON ELEKTRA--!
WHAP
--TAKE THE OFFENSIVE!
HE'S OUT OF REACH!
CHANG
NOT NOW!
KACHUNG
THANKS, YUKIO!


ISSUES

I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR ALL YOUR HELP, YUKIO... BUT IT SEEMS WE'VE WASTED OUR TIME HERE.
I'M NO CLOSER TO MY GOAL THAN I WAS BEFORE AND I STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHERE TO FIND KUROYAMA!
THAT MAY NOT BE THE CASE.
I KNOW, FOR INSTANCE, THAT LAST WEEK, FIVE POWERFUL BUSINESSMEN WHO ARE SUSPECTED OF BEING INFLUENTIAL MEMBERS OF THE HAND WERE SEEN BOARDING A CORPORATE JET THAT WAS BOUND FOR HONG KONG.
YOU KNOW, I HAVE A NETWORK OF CONTACTS WHO KEEP AN EYE ON THE DOINGS OF THE HAND.
HONG KONG, EH?
IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHAT RISES OUT OF THE BOTTOM WHEN I ROIL THOSE MURKY WATERS...
NEXT:
SHANG CHI
AND
KINGPIN!